

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: SOCIAL SERVICES - SOCIAL SERVICES, COUNTRYSIDE ADULT HOME & YOUTH PROGRAMS

DATE: JANUARY 28, 2011

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS LOEB
KENNY
BENTLEY
STRAINER
WOOD
MCDEVITT
SOKOL

OTHERS PRESENT:

SHEILA WEAVER, COMMISSIONER, DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
DEANNA PARK, DIRECTOR, COUNTRYSIDE ADULT HOME
WILLIAM CASEY, SIEMENS BUILDING TECHNOLOGIES, INC.
DANIEL G. STEC, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD
JOAN SADY, CLERK OF THE BOARD
JOANN MCKINSTRY, ASSISTANT TO THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR
KEVIN GERAGHTY, BUDGET OFFICER
SUPERVISORS GOODSPEED
MCCOY
THOMAS
DON LEHMAN, THE POST STAR
AMANDA ALLEN, SR. LEGISLATIVE OFFICE SPECIALIST

Mr. Loeb called the meeting of the Social Services Committee to order at 9:30 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Sokol, seconded by Mr. McDevitt and carried unanimously to approve the minutes from the prior meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk of the Board.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Sheila Weaver, Commissioner of the Department of Social Services (DSS), who distributed copies of her agenda to the Committee members. *A copy of the agenda is also on file with the minutes.*

Commencing the review with Agenda Item 1, Ms. Weaver presented a request to fill the vacant position of Social Services Investigator #2, base salary of \$33,026, due to a retirement that would become effective on February 25th.

Motion was made by Mr. Sokol, seconded by Mr. McDevitt and carried unanimously to approve the request to fill the vacant position of Social Services Investigator #2 and refer same to the Personnel Committee. *A copy of the Notice of Intent to Fill Vacant Position Form is on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Weaver announced that Agenda Item 2 consisted of a request to fill the vacant position of Caseworker #19, base salary of \$35,385, due to a resignation which was effective on January 25th.

Motion was made by Mr. McDevitt, seconded by Mr. Sokol and carried unanimously to approve the previously mentioned request and refer same to the Personnel Committee. *A copy of the Notice of Intent to Fill Vacant Position Form is on file with the minutes.*

Agenda Item 3, Ms. Weaver stated, included a request to fill the vacant position of Keyboard Specialist #1, base salary \$24,215, due to a resignation effective February 17th.

Motion was made by Mr. Bentley, seconded by Ms. Wood and carried unanimously to approve the request to fill the vacant position of Keyboard Specialist #1 and refer same to the Personnel Committee. *A copy of the Notice of Intent to Fill Vacant Position Form is on file with the minutes.*

Mr. Geraghty questioned whether exit interviews were being conducted with those employees leaving the County in light of the considerable turnover occurring within the Department and Ms. Weaver replied affirmatively. He noted that the feedback received from these interviews was very important as it would help to determine whether changes could be made to retain staff. Mr. Sokol suggested that Todd Lunt, Human Resources Director, be asked to prepare quarterly reports outlining the discussions held during exit interviews for consideration at future Personnel Committee meetings and Mr. Geraghty agreed that this was a good idea. Ms. Weaver interjected that in the cases of the positions previously addressed, the first was vacated due to retirement and the third due to resignation as the employee had secured a Caseworker position in Saratoga County which included a \$20,000 increase over the current salary. She added that an exit interview had been performed by Paul Dusek, County Attorney/Administrator, for the second vacancy outlined and that an interview had been scheduled with Mr. Lunt for the third. Ms. Weaver noted that at Mr. Lunt's request she had performed a study comparing the current rate of position turnovers to those that had occurred during the tenure of her predecessor and had found the figures to be similar.

Mr. Strainer questioned whether the base salary for a Caseworker position in Warren County was the same as in Saratoga County and Ms. Weaver replied in the negative, noting that the Saratoga County salary was higher. She expounded that the base salary for this position varied throughout the state from \$26,000 to \$65,000 and was negotiated by the appropriate union based on the median income for the area. Ms. Weaver advised the considerable salary increase in this case was due to the fact that this person was concluding her employment with Warren County as a Keyboard Specialist and joining the Saratoga County workforce as a Caseworker.

Resuming the agenda review, Ms. Weaver announced that Agenda Items 4 through 10 consisted of a number of in-State travel requests for staff education and training, which she proceeded to outline as follows:

4. Rachel Johnson, Kerry Watkins, Christina Mastrianni and Elizabeth Fregeau to attend Sexual Abuse Dynamics and Intervention Training in Albany, NY on March 23 - 25, 2011.

Motion was made by Mr. Sokol, seconded by Mr. McDevitt and carried unanimously to authorize the travel request as outlined above. *A copy of the Authorization to Attend Meeting or Convention form is on file with the minutes.*

5. Ms. Weaver to attend the NYSAC (New York State Association of Counties) 2011 Legislative Conference in Albany, NY on February 7 - 9, 2011.

Motion was made by Mr. Bentley, seconded by Mr. Sokol and carried unanimously to authorize the travel request as outlined above. *A copy of the Authorization to Attend Meeting or Convention form is on file with the minutes.*

6. Janet Baker and Cara Watkins to attend Child Protective Services Response Training in Albany, NY on February 28 - March 4, 2011 and March 14 - 18, 2011.

Motion was made by Mr. Sokol, seconded by Ms. Wood and carried unanimously to authorize the travel request as outlined above. *A copy of the Authorization to Attend Meeting or Convention form is on file with the minutes.*

7. Ms. Weaver to attend Advanced Analytics for Child Welfare Administration in Rensselaer, NY for two days during the week of March 21, 2011.

Motion was made by Mr. Bentley, seconded by Mr. Strainer and carried unanimously to authorize the travel request as outlined above. *A copy of the Authorization to Attend Meeting or Convention form is on file with the minutes.*

8. Ann Hayden to attend Temporary Assistance training in Albany, NY on February 14 - 18, 2011 and February 28 - March 4, 2011. Ms. Weaver noted that Ms. Hayden would likely seek overnight accommodations during her training at a cost of \$39 per night.

Motion was made by Mr. Sokol, seconded by Mr. McDevitt and carried unanimously to authorize the travel request as outlined above. *A copy of the Authorization to Attend Meeting or Convention form is on file with the minutes.*

9. The new employee hired to fill the Caseworker position approved in Agenda Item 2, to attend Child Welfare/Child Protective Services Common Core Training in Albany, NY on March 1 - 4, 2011, March 15 - 18, 2011, March 29 - April 1, 2011 and April 11 - 15, 2011.

Motion was made by Mr. Bentley, seconded by Ms. Wood and carried unanimously to authorize the travel request as outlined above. *A copy of the Authorization to Attend Meeting or Convention form is on file with the minutes.*

10. Maureen Taylor to attend Child Protective Supervisory Core Mod II Training in Syracuse, NY on March 7 - 10, 2011 and March 21 - 24, 2011. Ms. Weaver noted that Ms. Taylor would be securing overnight accommodations during her training at a rate of \$45 per night.

Motion was made by Mr. Sokol, seconded by Mr. Strainer and carried unanimously to authorize the travel request as outlined above. *A copy of the Authorization to Attend Meeting or Convention form is on file with the minutes.*

Mr. Strainer questioned whether all of the training listed was for new employees and Ms. Weaver replied in the negative, noting that aside from the training listed for Agenda Item 9, the persons listed were experienced staff members whose positions would benefit from the continuing education courses identified.

Proceeding to the Old Business/Pending Items section of the agenda, Ms Weaver announced that she had no new information to present relative to the examination of properties for sale that might be suitable for housing the homeless in Warren County.

In response to Mr. Stec's inquiry regarding the total number of homeless persons seeking assistance, Ms. Weaver apprised they averaged between 2 and 3 new people seeking housing assistance each month. She noted that as of the prior day, they were housing 17 homeless persons, not all of which were sex offenders. Mr. McDevitt questioned the current procedure for housing the homeless, to which Ms. Weaver replied that homeless people were easily placed in area hotels and motels, while the more difficult to place homeless sex offenders were placed in hotels located in surrounding Counties; however, she noted, this was a temporary solution.

Mr. Strainer opined there seemed to be no rules or regulations stipulated in association with benefits offered to the homeless population which encouraged them to partake of programming aimed at bettering their situations in order to become a self-sufficient and productive member of society. He suggested there might be a member of the private sector willing to provide housing and motivation of this sort whom the County could contract with and provide funding to, rather than purchasing and maintaining a building at the County-level for homeless housing, and he questioned whether this possibility had been researched. Ms. Weaver replied that she was not aware of any persons willing to provide an opportunity of this nature for homeless sex offenders and noted that they had no difficulties housing the remaining homeless population. With reference to stipulations attached to homeless benefits, Ms. Weaver apprised that the homeless persons housed were required to provide proof of at least ten job and apartment searches weekly and were subject to random room checks to ensure there were no drugs or alcohol on premises. Mr. Strainer noted that there were free courses offered through Cornell Cooperative Extension which would teach

homeless people how to manage money and purchase and prepare food which he felt would be beneficial to benefit recipients in helping them to become independently sufficient; he added his opinion that partaking of these free courses should become a mandatory stipulation in order to receive housing assistance.

Discussion ensued.

Concluding the agenda review, Ms. Weaver addressed the Topics for Discussion section of the agenda, which she outlined as follows:

1. Overtime Report. Ms. Weaver noted that a copy of the Overtime Report was included in the agenda packet and reflected a 31 hour increase in overtime use as compared to the prior year. She said that a considerable amount of the overtime was attributed to Child Protective Services after hours calls and noted the new Caseworker position requested would help to lower some of the overtime used. Ms. Weaver advised there would likely be increases in the Temporary Assistance and Food Stamps divisions commensurate with the increased case load faced.
2. Budget Status Report. Copies of the Revenue and Expense Budget Performance Reports for both 2010 and 2011 were included in the agenda, Ms. Weaver stated. She announced that the total revenues received for 2010 were currently at 66% of the total anticipated figure, but said she felt this figure would increase as the revenues for November and December were not included in the report. As for 2010 expenses, Ms. Weaver said they had currently expended 91% of the total budget and noted that although there were still some outstanding invoices to be paid, she anticipated there would be funds remaining which would be returned to the General Fund. She advised that only 2% of the 2011 Budget had been expended thus far. Additionally, Ms. Weaver pointed out that the agenda included two separate Budget Analysis sheets which listed budgetary figures in different manners, one by Departmental salaries and the other by the programs offered. She asked the Committee members to review the two documents at their leisure and advise which version of the report they preferred for future distributions.
3. Update on Caseloads in Different Program Areas. Ms. Weaver apprised that 1652 Child Protective Services reports had been received in 2010, which was approximately 200 more than the 1448 received in 2009. As for disability reviews, she said there had been 312 performed in 2010, as opposed to 143 in 2009.
4. Meeting with Community Maternity, Public Health and DSS. Included in the agenda packet, Ms. Weaver advised, was a copy of the memo forwarded to Mr. Loeb outlining the results of the meeting held between representatives of the DSS, Public Health Department and Community Maternity Services on December 8, 2010, as well as a chart listing the services provided by each group. She said it was determined that it would not be economically prudent to contract with Community Maternity Services, based on the fact that the services they provided were duplicates of those already offered by the DSS and Public Health Department and that monies were not available within the DSS budget to fund the contract. Ms. Weaver indicated that the DSS and Public Health Department would continue to refer cases to Community Maternity Services as needed and said that any cases specifically court ordered to seek out assistance from Community Maternity Services would be facilitated; likewise, she added, Community Maternity Services would refer cases to DSS and the Public Health Department in the event that there was a waiting list for necessary services.

There being no further Social Services business to discuss, privilege of the floor was extended to Deanna Park, Director of Countryside Adult Home, who distributed copies of her agenda to the Committee members. *A copy of the agenda is also on file with the minutes.*

Beginning with Agenda Item 1, Ms. Park requested permission to submit a grant application to the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) for EQUAL (Enhancing the Quality of Adult Living) funding for an amount not to exceed \$29,753.04. She said this was a guaranteed grant with the specified amount being based upon the number of Safety Net benefit recipients claimed in 2009 and incorporated a February 4th deadline for application submission, which fell before the date of the February Board meeting. Ms. Park apprised that the grant funds would be used to purchase privacy curtains, bed spreads, window treatments and possibly furniture for Countryside residents.

Motion was made by Mr. Sokol, seconded by Ms. Wood and carried unanimously to ratify the actions of the Director of the Countryside Adult Home in submitting a grant application to NYSDOH as outlined above and the necessary resolution was authorized for the February 18th Board meeting. *A copy of the request is on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Park announced that Agenda Item 2 consisted of a resolution request authorizing the Chairman of the Board to sign acceptance of the Year 3 Siemens Performance Assurance Report for the term extending from June 1, 2009 to May 31, 2010. She then introduced William Casey, of Siemens Building Technologies, Inc., who was in attendance to answer any questions the Committee might have respective to the Report. Mr. Casey distributed copies of the Performance Assurance Report which he proceeded to review for the Committee's benefit. *A copy of the Performance Assurance Report is on file with the minutes.*

Following discussion on the report, motion was made by Mr. Sokol, seconded by Mr. Bentley and carried by majority vote to authorize the Chairman of the Board to sign acceptance of the Performance Assurance Report, with Messrs. McDevitt and Strainer voting in opposition, and the necessary resolution was authorized for the February 18th Board meeting. *A copy of the request is on file with the minutes.*

Continuing to Agenda Item 3, Ms. Park requested authorization to develop an RFP (request for proposals) for laundry services at Countryside Adult Home. She pointed out that the agenda included information detailing the actual costs incurred for laundry services provided at the Westmount Health Facility as compared to the anticipated costs of contracting with an outside agency for the same services. Ms. Park noted that the fiscal information provided indicated a potential savings of at least \$12,000 per year if they were to secure laundry services from an alternate provider.

Mr. Strainer said he recalled that this issue had been raised in the past, at which time it had been determined the services would be better provided at the Westmount Health Facility due to the need to incorporate use of the co-generation facility at that site. He then questioned whether the figures provided accounted for losses incurred at Westmount if the laundry services were removed and Ms. Park replied in the negative. Chairman Stec interjected that although the potential savings projected for Countryside seemed substantial, they might not be actual savings to the County if removing the services adversely affected Westmount in a greater amount. Ms. Park stated that she was not opposed to continuing laundry services with Westmount, but questioned whether the associated billing process was accurate as Countryside was paying labor costs, as well as laundry by the pound fees charged by Westmount. She added that it seemed they were paying for laundry services twice, which did not seem appropriate. Ms. Weaver added that Countryside received only 50% State reimbursement for laundry costs, with the remaining 50% being funded through the Countryside budget with taxpayer dollars. In response, Chairman Stec said it seemed there were two issues to be considered, those being whether a true savings could be obtained by securing laundry services from an outside source and whether the invoicing practices used by the Westmount Health Facility to charge for laundry services was appropriate.

Subsequent to additional discussion on the matter, it was the consensus of the Committee that Ms. Park should meet with Mr. Dusek to review the issue and the associated financial estimates to determine whether a real savings could be achieved for securing laundry services through an alternate source and return to the Committee with her findings.

Resuming the agenda review, Ms. Park addressed the Old Business/Pending Items section of the agenda, which she outlined as follows:

1. No new information was available relative to the establishment of a sub-Committee to make determinations on the future of Countryside Adult Home, Ms. Park said. Mr. Strainer stated that in his opinion, it was not sensible to sell the facility as a greater cost would be incurred to the County by displaced residents who were forced to seek out alternate Social Services benefits to support them. Mr. Sokol said that although he had been open to the idea of privatization in the past, he felt that the facility was now operating on a much better standing. He added that he felt Ms. Park was doing an outstanding job as Director and in light of these factors, he was in favor of retaining the Countryside facility in its current operation and discontinuing any discussion on privatization. As the rest of the Committee was in agreement, it was determined that this item should be removed from the Pending Items list.

Mr. Geraghty advised that each time a comment was made about privatizing the facility it caused a great deal of unease amongst Countryside employees as they were unsure about the future of their positions which were very important to the Warrensburg community. He said that if this item was going to be removed from the Pending Items list, he felt it was important that assurances be made to the County employees working at Countryside that their positions were safe and that the facility would continue to operate in its current capacity. Mr. Geraghty then suggested that Ms. Park hold a staff meeting to facilitate these measures. Ms. Park responded that this matter was upsetting to the Countryside residents, as well as the employees, as such discussions made them unsure about the future of their home, which was extremely unsettling to them. She added her opinion that it would be appropriate to take action at the Board level to officially make assurances that Countryside Adult Home would remain in operation.

2. Ms. Park advised that she would prefer to delay any discussion on the request for a resolution to pursue a Social Adult Day Care Waiver from the State until the next Committee meeting due to time constraints;
3. No new information was available relative to Mr. Dusek's research of the invoices from Technical Building Services, Ms. Park stated. She noted the glycol levels relative to the boiler operation had been appropriate and she believed emergency shut off and bleeder valves were to be installed during the following week in an effort to rectify the situation causing a lack of heat in certain rooms; she added that she was unsure whether these installations would cause a glycol loss. Mr. Strainer asked if the introduction of glycol into the heating system had initially solved the heating problem and Ms. Park replied that it had, but the effects had only lasted for approximately four minutes before the heat ceased once again. She added there were currently four rooms affected by the lack of heat and they had removed residents from those rooms and placed them in others with functioning heat. Ms. Park said they were not sure what had caused the lack of heat for these rooms and had attempted to bleed the entire system to fix the problem, as well as adding glycol, but neither had proved to be a solution. Mr. Strainer asked if the system incorporated circulator units and Ms. Park replied affirmatively. Ms. Wood questioned whether the circulators were located at the boiler or throughout the facility and Ms. Park replied they were installed throughout the facility, with one specific to this

- wing of the building and although it appeared the circulator was working appropriately there was not heat. She added that they thought there was air in the system causing the lack of heat, but the absence of emergency shut off and bleeder valves prevented them from shutting off the heating system in certain areas to appropriately bleed the air from the system to restore it to working order. Ms. Park concluded that if the valve installation did not help to fix the problem, they would likely wait until the spring when the weather was warmer to shut down the entire heating system in an attempt to bleed air from the lines in that way; and
4. Respective to concerns expressed by Hudson Headwaters Health Network (HHHN) regarding contract rates, Ms. Weaver advised that representatives of the organization had been invited to attend the meeting to express their displeasure with the rates stipulated; however, she noted, the representatives were not in attendance. Mr. Geraghty interjected that he had spoken with HHHN representatives to resolve the matter and contract rates would be accepted as previously presented. He added that if any further objections were received, Ms. Park should contact him directly and he would address the matter. Ms. Park concluded the discussion by noting that the agenda included a spreadsheet listing the changes in contract costs.

Concluding the Agenda review, Ms. Park outlined the Topics for Discussion section, as follows:

1. Overtime. Ms. Park announced that 104 overtime hours had been incurred during the prior two pay cycles, which included a holiday. She noted that the overall figures were 8.6 hours lower than those reported for the same period during the prior year;
2. Current Census. Countryside Adult Home currently cared for 41 residents, Ms. Park apprised, consisting of 16 men and 25 women with the average resident age being 71.5;
3. Referrals for the Month. Ms. Park said three referrals had been received thus far for the month of January. She added that there had been no admissions and one discharge;
4. VA (Veterans' Administration) Aid & Attendance Applications. They were currently awaiting determinations on three applications submitted for benefits, Ms. Park advised. She noted that six applications submitted had been denied and they were awaiting proper paperwork, (i.e. discharge papers from the VA, marriage licenses, death certificates, etc.) for five additional prospective applicants.

Before concluding the meeting, Mr. Loeb noted that JoAnn McKinstry, Assistant to the County Administrator, had a final request to present at Mr. Dusek's request. Mrs. McKinstry advised that Senator Elizabeth Little was petitioning the State for Youth Court funding as the associated budget was facing a deficit of approximately \$22,700. She added that Senator Little was seeking a resolution of support from Warren County in favor of these efforts.

Motion was made by Mr. Bentley, seconded by Mr. Strainer and carried unanimously to approve the above referenced request and the necessary resolution was authorized for the February 18th Board meeting.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, on motion made by Mr. Bentley and seconded by Ms. Wood, Mr. Loeb adjourned the meeting at 10:39 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Amanda Allen, Sr. Legislative Office Specialist